

Social Studies Notes: Unit 1, Chapter 2

Lesson 2.1: What is a Region?

1. Defining Regions

- a. Geographers divide the world into regions to help organize ideas about people and places
- b. A region is an area that shares one or more features
- c. These features make one region different from one another
- d. Features in Common
 - i. Government: system of making and carrying out rules and laws
 - ii. Countries...
 - iii. Population: the number of people that live in an area
 - iv. Religion: system of faith or worship (beliefs)
 - v. Language: a way of speaking
 - vi. Regions can be as small as a neighborhood or as big as a hemisphere
- e. Borders, Boundaries, and Belts
 - i. Lines that show exactly where regions begin and end are called borders
 1. Borders separate countries and states
 - ii. Most regions have boundaries instead of borders
 1. Boundaries can be rivers or roads
 - iii. Belts: a region that shares one feature across a large area
 1. Examples: Corn Belt, Sun Belt, Snow Belt

2. How Regions are Used

- a. Gov'ts, businesses, and other groups use regions to do their jobs better
- b. Using Regions
 - i. Governments divide countries or states into regions to: Keep track of resources and understand the needs of the people who live there
 - ii. People use regions to help make decisions
 1. Winter Coat Factory
 - a. Where to build? Where there are workers
 - b. Where to sell coats? Where people wear winter coats
 2. What of kind of coats? What styles are popular?

Lesson Review

1. The population of a region is made up of every person who lives there.
2. Regions help governments decide how to use resources and understand the needs of the people who live there.
3. The culture (language, history, religion, food, etc.) of a population can be used to define a region.
4. A town or a city could be part of a county, a state, a country, a continent, and a historical or cultural region (13 colonies, New England).

Lesson 2.2: Regions of the United States

1. Types of Regions

- a. To understand the United States we divide it into regions
- b. *Natural Regions*
 - i. One way to divide the U.S. into regions is to base the regions on physical features, such as mountains, water, valleys, deserts, plains, plateaus
 - ii. Plant life defines other regions such as wetlands, grasslands, forests
 - iii. Other natural regions are defined by soil, animals, minerals
 1. River basin: the whole area drained by a river
- c. *Human Regions*
 - i. People also define regions by human features, such as religion or language

- ii. Regions can change: they get smaller or larger for many reasons
 - iii. History: Latino culture in the Southwest (language too)
 - iv. Religion: Mormons in Utah
 - v. Jobs: Silicon Valley in CA for computers
 - vi. Types of communities
 - 1. Urban: city
 - a. Examples: (Boston, New York, Miami)
 - 2. Suburban: smaller towns/cities near a large city
 - a. Examples: Ayer, Shirley, Concord, Elizabeth, NJ
 - 3. Rural: country areas with less people
 - a. Example: Vermont, Maine, NH
- d. *States and Regions*
- i. The four regions of the U.S. are East, West, Midwest, South
 - 1. Their names tell where they are!
 - ii. States in the same region are located close together
 - 1. They are divided by state borders
 - 2. They may share natural features
- e. *Human Links within Regions*
- i. Human features connect the states in each region
 - 1. History: Spain and Mexico once owned much of the Western U.S.
 - 2. Economy: the way people of an area choose to use resources and make money (fishing, etc.)
 - 3. Agriculture: farming
 - 4. Sports: basketball in Midwest, football in New England
 - 5. Places: New York (East); Grand Canyon/ deserts (West)

Lesson 2.3: Climate Regions

1. *Weather and Climate*

- A. Weather: the day-to-day conditions in the atmosphere
 - i. Air movements cause weather to change
 - ii. Warm air rises and cold air sinks
- B. Conditions and Climate
 - i. Precipitation: water that falls from the sky
 - 1. Examples: hail, sleet/freezing rain, rain, snow
 - 2. Temperatures: how hot or cold the air is
 - ii. Climate: the usual weather in a place over a long time (30 years)
 - 1. Three things affect climate
 - a. Latitude: the farther away from the equator, the less sun a place gets
 - b. Distance from large bodies of water: places closer to oceans have a smaller range of temperatures
 - c. Elevation: the height of the land
 - i. At higher elevations, temperatures are usually lower.

2. *A Land of Many Climates*

- A. The world is divided into 6 climate regions
 - i. Tropical Humid: Hawaii, Southern Florida
 - ii. Dry: (Desert) Arizona, New Mexico, Nevada, Texas
 - iii. Marine: Oregon, Washington, California
 - iv. Continental: Massachusetts, Maine, New York
 - v. Highland: Idaho, Montana, Rocky Mountains
 - vi. Polar: Alaska

3. *Climate and People*

A. Climate affects every part of our lives: How?

- i. Plants: some plants can only grow in certain climates (adaptation): cactus, orchids
- ii. Animals: some animals only live in certain regions/climates (adaptation): polar bear
- iii. People:
 1. Effects on how people live: Climate affects the way people live: clothing, Air Conditioning/Heat, Vehicles,
 2. Effects on jobs (economy): Climate affects the way people work: snow days, factories, farming

B. Severe Weather

- i. Hurricane: a storm with strong and damaging winds
- ii. Blizzard: heavy snowstorm with strong winds
- iii. Tornado: twisting column of fast moving air